

Profile of Ralph Victor Clayman, MD

Professor and Chair, Department of Urology

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Ralph Victor Clayman was born in New York City a little over a half century ago. He was the first of 3 sons to his physician father and nurse mother. Both of his parents instilled in him the quest for new knowledge and to be the best you can be.

He graduated with honors from Grinnell College in Iowa with a Bachelor of Science degree. It was there that he honed his work ethic along with the ability to enjoy life and play football. He studied medicine at the University of California at San Diego where he realized 2 significant achievements: he met Carol, his soul mate and wife-to-be, and received his medical degree. He completed his general surgery and urology residency training at the University of Minnesota where he excelled. In Minneapolis, he and his wife, Carol, learned to enjoy the recreational opportunities of marathon running and broom-ball. It was there that he developed an interest in oncologic urology and had the good fortune to be exposed to the then new concept of "endourology" while working with Dr. Arthur Smith. After 2 years as a junior faculty member at the University of Minnesota, he undertook a self-designed fellowship at the University of Texas Southwestern at Dallas where he developed 2 new renal cancer research cell lines and pioneered several of the now well-established endourologic procedures, such as percutaneous nephrolithotomy. In 1984, he joined the faculty of the Division of Urologic Surgery at Washington University Medical School in St. Louis, rising to the positions of Professor of Urology and Radiology, Director of the Midwest Stone Institute, and Co-Director of Minimally Invasive Surgery.

Dr. Clayman instigated the concept of extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy (SWL) for the management of renal stone disease at Washington University. Under his directive, this became one of the first North American

centers to undertake clinical evaluation for FDA approval of the Dornier HM3 and the Siemens Lithostar lithotriptors. He performed extensive animal laboratory research and clinical trials of this new technology, which has helped to define the indications and techniques of this revolutionary treatment of stone disease. Quite literally, renal stone surgery ceased to be maximally invasive with a flank incision and became completely noninvasive with SWL. In addition to his technique defining research in this area, he accepted the responsibility of the Medical Director of the Midwest Stone Institute and established a clinical fellowship in Endourology and ESWL, which is world-renowned.

His quest for reducing the invasiveness of surgical interventions for urologic patients led him to work with many different surgical equipment and instrument industries to develop revolutionary devices, and he is named on 7 patents related to minimally invasive surgical instrumentation. With the support of his definitive animal studies in laparoscopic renal surgery, he and his associates performed the world's first laparoscopic removal of kidneys for benign and malignant disease in 1990. He subsequently pioneered many laparoscopic renal surgery procedures, including laparoscopic cyst decortication for



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autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease (ADPKD), laparoscopic radical nephroureterectomy for tumor disease, and laparoscopic live-donor nephrectomy with the initial animal studies.

Dr. Clayman is the editor and/or author of definitive textbooks on laparoscopic and percutaneous renal surgery and has published more than 300 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters. He is co-founder and co-editor of the *Journal of Endourology*. He has been an invited member of the editorial boards of numerous peer-reviewed journals, including the *Journal of Urology*, *Urology*, and the *Journal of the Society of Laparoendoscopic Surgeons*. In addition to his pioneering work on percutaneous and endoscopic therapy on ureteral and kidney stone disease, he developed a unique cutting balloon catheter to treat ureteral stricture disease in a minimally invasive manner.

Dr. Clayman has been the recipient of numerous, prestigious national and international awards. Among these are the 1998 AUA Dornier Innovator's Award, the 1999 AUA Hugh Hampton Young Award, the 1999 first recipient of the Karl Storz Award for Innovation and Achievement, the 2000 AUA Ramon Guiteras Lectureship, the 2001 SLS Excel Award, the 2002 Barringer Medal for Outstanding Achievement in Urology from the American Association of Genitourinary Surgeons, and the 2003 Alliance for Continuing Medical Education First Prize for Most Outstanding Certified Live CME Activity in Advanced Laparoscopy, 2001. All of these awards attest to his dedication and commitment to patient care, teaching, and research efforts focused on developing a kinder, gentler surgery for urologic diseases and disorders.

One of the most significant contributions Dr. Clayman has made to minimally invasive surgery is the training of national and international physicians in endourology and laparoscopic surgery. Graduates of his fellowship program have become the Who's Who of Minimally Invasive Urologic Surgery around the world. He has the unique

ability to provide the environment and tutelage to allow bright, young investigators to realize their goals in laboratory and clinical research. At the same time, he provides guidance as they pursue their careers to optimize their potential and continued achievements. He continues in his fervor for excellence in his new position as Chairman of the Department of Urology at the University of California Irvine to develop his ambitious and innovative ideas in minimally invasive surgical education for residents, fellows, and community urologists. Within the first year of his chairmanship at the University of California Irvine, he founded the Yamanouchi Center for Urological Education, which is committed to transferring the knowledge and skills of minimally invasive urologic surgery to community urologists. He strives to make this a format for multidisciplinary teaching and research in minimally invasive surgery.

To counterbalance this remarkable intelligence, he has a wonderful joie de vivre and shares this with his family and friends. He is blessed with his compassionate and intelligent wife, Carol, to enjoy many happy times with their 2 sons, Matthew and Bradley. Matthew is completing his premedical program at the University of Michigan. Ralph remains close to his 2 brothers and shares memorable weekends in New York, the city their mother taught them to appreciate and love. His friends and family treasure his exuberance for life and respect his dedication to the advancement of minimally invasive surgery.

Ralph Clayman is a most accomplished and multitented individual who is respected in all circles of minimally invasive surgery. He has dedicated his research and practice to making minimally invasive surgery a safe and effective reality for patients worldwide. His enthusiastic teaching inspires surgeons to develop and improve surgical techniques that will benefit tomorrow's patients with even less invasive options for management of urologic diseases.